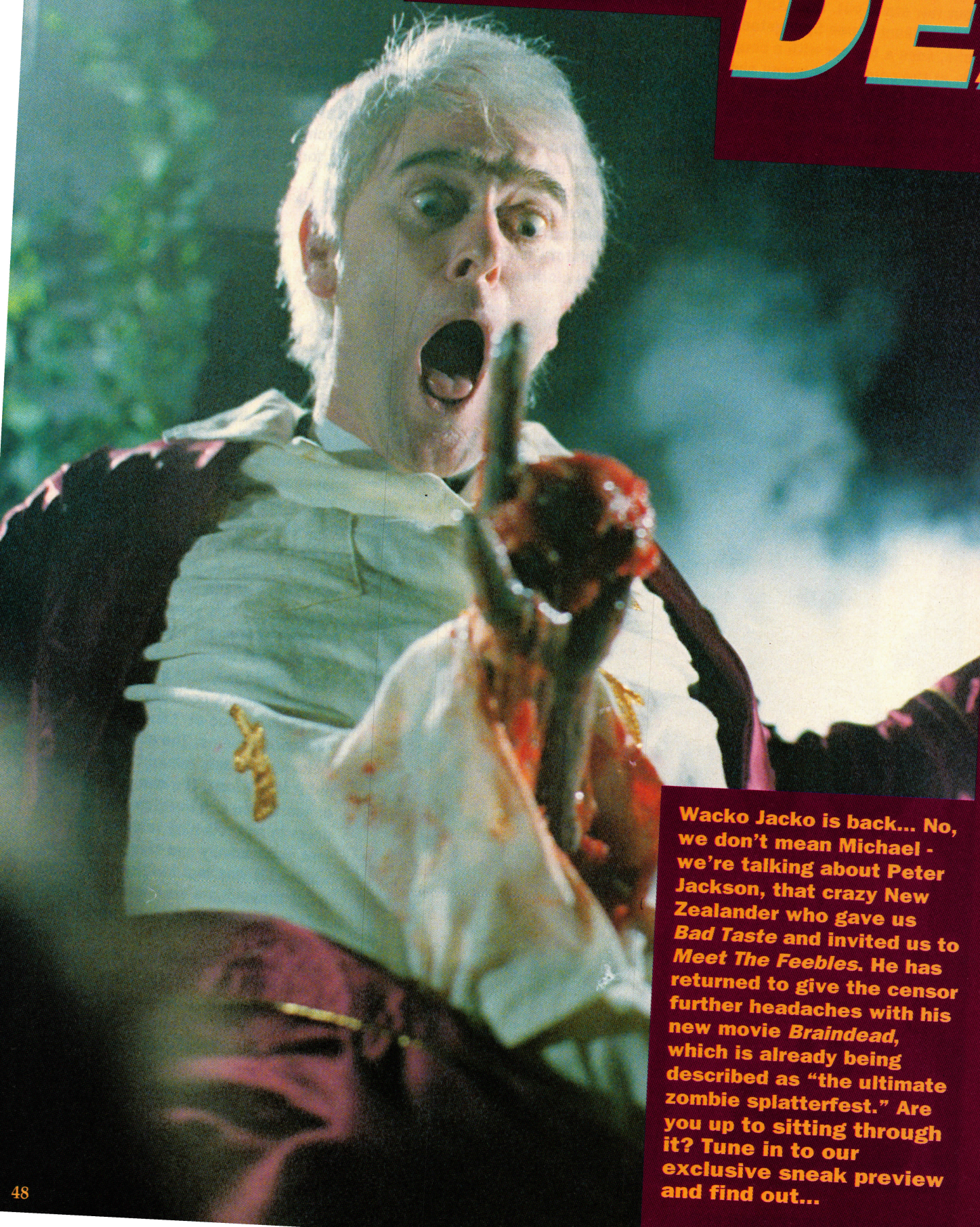


BRAIN DEAD



Wacko Jacko is back... No, we don't mean Michael - we're talking about Peter Jackson, that crazy New Zealander who gave us *Bad Taste* and invited us to *Meet The Feebles*. He has returned to give the censor further headaches with his new movie *Braindead*, which is already being described as "the ultimate zombie splatterfest." Are you up to sitting through it? Tune in to our exclusive sneak preview and find out...

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First of all, for those of you experiencing a certain sense of déjà-vu, we have to say we make no excuses for returning to the subject of Peter Jackson's latest gore epic, *Braindead*, a VW Sneak Preview some months back. Our earlier piece was written whilst the film was still in production, but now it is finished and there's a chance for readers who live near London to catch up with this audience-pleasing gore epic at the London Film Festival in November, where it is being screened alongside other such long-awaited chillers as Sam Raimi's *Army Of Darkness: Evil Dead III*.

But one word of warning. If you're lucky enough to get a ticket, be sure to take a large brown paper bag with you - just in case your stomach is not up to some of the sickening sights on offer. If you thought *Bad Taste* was gory, just wait until you get a

load of this one. In fact, Jackson goes so far over the top as to almost blast off into the stratosphere. We attended an advance screening and can honestly say that never have we sat through a movie with so much blood and guts on display - usually flying about by the bucketful and slithering down the walls.

Still interested in hearing about it? Well let's continue...

The hero of this nauseating tale is Lionel (Timothy Balme), a young man living under the roof (and in the shadow of) his horrendous mother. When he falls for shop girl Pacquita, his mum is most upset and does everything she can to end the relationship. Lionel sneaks off to meet his paramour at the local zoo, unaware that he is being shadowed by his suspicious mum. She ends up paying for her nosiness by



being bitten by a Sumatran Rat Monkey (smuggled off Skull Island in the gory prologue).

The bite has a nasty effect on mum. Pretty soon she starts swelling up all over and squirting lumpy blood everywhere. This plays havoc with her social life. When she attends a dinner of the Wellington Ladies' Welfare League she causes something of a stir by dropping her ear in the soup, then squirting pus into the custard!

Poor old mum eventually expires in a welter of blood, gore and strangely coloured liquids. But she immediately wakes up again and bites her nurse, transforming her into a similarly dilapidated zombie creature. Every time one of these zombies bites somebody else they get a new convert to their undead army. In the midst of all this, poor Lionel still has to maintain the stability of the household. So he decides to put his foot down and lock all the zombies in the cellar. Things come to a (severed) head when slimy, loathsome Uncle Les turns up to cheat our Lionel out of his inheritance. Les takes over

the house unaware of the unwelcome guests in the basement and decides to throw a wild party to celebrate his good fortune. Bad mistake. Before long the zombies have crashed out to join the fun and what they do to Les and his party guests doesn't bear discussion in a family magazine!

Almost the entire last half hour of this movie is made up of gory special effects mayhem, with bodies chopped in half, heads stuck in blenders and impaled on light fittings and one totally amazing effect in which a victim has the flesh peeled off his skull with one swift pull - the ultimate short, back and sides!

As in *The Evil Dead*, these zombies can't be easily dealt with by a bullet through the brain. You've got to literally pull them to pieces - and then the pieces come back at you. In one scene Lionel chops a zombie in half and shakes it so hard that all of its internal organs fall out over the floor. But that's not enough, because the entrails then reorganise themselves into a spider-like creature (shades of *The Thing*) and continue

to fight back!

The gore level is even more intense than that of *Bad Taste*, but it's offset by hefty doses of typically off-the-wall Jackson humour. For example, one of the most memorable support characters is Father McGruder, a kick-boxing cleric who takes on a zombie that's attacking Lionel with the cry of: "Stand back, son. I kick arse for the Lord!" *Braindead*'s \$1.8 million budget is the largest that Jackson has yet had to work with. "That buys an adequate amount of gore in anybody's language," he says. "*Bad Taste* was sort of an incredible four year endurance test that became more mental torture than anything else. *Meet The Feebles*, on the other hand, was physically very difficult, what with me acting as my own camera operator most of the time. By comparison, *Braindead* went very smoothly. Basically I just walked around telling everyone what to do. I guess with it being my third film I've finally figured out how it all works."

He certainly has. Of course the question that most of you out there will be asking is: "How



and when can I see this movie?" Well, if you're not able to make it along to the LFF screening, you'll be pleased to know that *Braindead* is currently in the tender hands of our beloved BBFC and according to the film's UK agent (Perfect Pictures) it's likely to get through completely uncut - as did *Bad Taste* - because the board feel that it can't be taken seriously. It is, after all, more of a grotesque, Monty Python style comedy than an out-and-out horror movie. The bottom line is, if you laughed yourself sick at the botched invasion of the vomit gastronomes from outer space in *Bad Taste* and had fun wallowing in the depravity of *Meet The Feebles* (which, coincidentally, hits our video shops this month on the Island World label), then *Braindead* is for you. The only question remaining is, how can Jackson top himself with his next picture, the sinisterly titled *Blubberbeard*?

